CLAIMS:

1. An optical signal receiving unit (10) comprising:

- an optical sensor (20) for receiving optical signals including an optical information signal and an optical program signal,
- control means (30) for providing a control signal in dependence on said optical program signal, and
- a signal processor (40) for processing at least the optical information signal to produce a processed signal, the signal processor (40) having an operating mode set by the control signal.

2. An optical signal receiving unit (10) as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising a program control terminal (51) for receiving a program control signal to enable the control means (30) to be programmed by a program signal derived from the optical program signal.

3. An optical signal receiving unit (10) as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the control means (30) comprise a first decoder (31) for decoding the optical program signal to provide a decoded program signal.

4. An optical signal receiving unit (10) as claimed in Claim 3, wherein the first decoder (31) comprises a pulse counter (32).

5. An optical signal receiving unit (10) as claimed in Claim 3, wherein the control means (30) further comprise a memory device (33) for storing and providing the decoded program signal.

6. An optical signal receiving unit (10) as claimed in Claim 5, wherein the control means (30) further comprise a second decoder (35) for further decoding the decoded program signal provided by the memory device (33) to provide the control signal.

7. An optical signal receiving unit (10) as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the optical sensor (20) comprises:

- a first detector (21) for providing the optical information signal to the signal processor (40) , and
- a second detector (210) for providing a program signal to the control means (30), the program signal being derived from the optical program signal.

8. An optical signal receiving unit (10) as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising a monitor terminal (52) for monitoring the optical program signal.

9. An optical signal receiving unit (10) as claimed in Claim 5, wherein:

- the control means (30) is able to provide a first control signal and a second control signal as the control signal,
- the signal processor (40) has a first operating mode set by the first control signal and a second operating mode set by the second control signal, and the optical signal receiving unit (10) further comprises
- a program switch terminal (53) for receiving a program switch signal enabling the control means (30) to switch between the first control signal and the second control signal.

10. An apparatus (100) for reproducing information from an optical data carrier (101), the apparatus (100) comprising:

- a light source (102) for irradiating the optical data carrier (101) to generate an optical signal,
- an optical signal receiving unit (10) as claimed in Claim 1,
- system controlling means (160) for controlling the light source (102) and for further processing the processed signal.

11. An apparatus (100) as claimed in Claim 10, wherein:

- the optical information signal is generated by the light source (102) and the optical data carrier (101), and
- the optical program signal is generated by the light source (102), and

the optical sensor (20) comprises:

- a first detector (21) for receiving the optical information signal and for providing the optical information signal to the signal processor (40), and
- a second detector (210) for receiving the optical program signal and for providing the optical program signal to the control means (30).